

# Andy Beshear

**Andrew Graham Beshear** (born November 29, 1977) is an American attorney and politician. Since December 2019, he has served as the 63rd Governor of Kentucky. A member of the Democratic Party, he is the son of Steve Beshear, the 61st Governor of Kentucky.

Beshear was elected attorney general of Kentucky in November 2015. As attorney general, Beshear sued Governor Matt Bevin several times over issues such as health care and pensions, before challenging and narrowly defeating Bevin in the 2019 gubernatorial election.

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Beshear in 2020

**63rd Governor of Kentucky**

**Incumbent**

**Assumed office**

December 10, 2019

**Lieutenant** Jacqueline Coleman

**Preceded by** Matt Bevin

**50th Attorney General of Kentucky**

**In office**

January 4, 2016 – December 10, 2019

**Governor** Matt Bevin

**Preceded by** Jack Conway

**Succeeded by** Daniel Cameron

#### Personal details

**Born** Andrew Graham Beshear  
November 29, 1977  
Louisville, Kentucky, U.S.

**Political party** Democratic

**Spouse(s)** Britany Colman (m. 2006)

**Children** 2

**Relatives** Steve Beshear (father)

**Residence** Governor's Mansion

**Education** Vanderbilt University (BA)  
University of Virginia (JD)

**Signature**

**Website** Government website (http

## Early life and education

Beshear is the son of Steve and Jane (Klingner) Beshear.<sup>[1]</sup> He grew up in Fayette, Franklin, and Clark counties and graduated from Henry Clay High School in Lexington, Kentucky. Steve Beshear was the Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky from 2007 to 2015.<sup>[2]</sup>

Beshear attended Vanderbilt University, where he was a member of the Sigma Chi Fraternity and graduated *magna cum laude* with a bachelor's degree in political science and anthropology. He then attended the

University of Virginia School of Law, where he received his Juris Doctor. In 2005, he was hired by the law firm Stites & Harbison.<sup>[3][4]</sup> He represented the developers of the Bluegrass Pipeline, which would have transported natural gas through the state.<sup>[5]</sup>

s://governor.ky.gov/About-Us/Pages/Governor-Andy-Beshear.aspx)

## Political career

### Kentucky Attorney General

#### 2015 Kentucky Attorney General election

In November 2013, Beshear announced his candidacy for the 2015 election for Attorney General of Kentucky to succeed Democrat Jack Conway, who could not run for reelection due to term limits.<sup>[6][7]</sup> He defeated Republican Whitney Westerfield by a margin of 0.2 percent, getting 50.1% of the vote to Westerfield's 49.9%.<sup>[8][9]</sup>

#### Tenure

In April 2016, Beshear sued governor Matt Bevin over his mid-cycle budget cuts to the state university system, which Beshear said Bevin was not authorized to do.<sup>[10]</sup> The Kentucky Supreme Court issued a 5-2 ruling agreeing with Beshear that Bevin did not have the authority to make mid-cycle budget cuts without the approval of the General Assembly.<sup>[11]</sup>

In April 2018, Beshear again successfully sued Bevin, this time for signing Senate Bill 151, a controversial plan to reform teacher pensions,<sup>[12][13]</sup> with the Supreme Court ruling the bill unconstitutional.<sup>[14]</sup>

By November 2018, Beshear had filed nine lawsuits against pharmaceutical companies for their alleged involvement in fueling Kentucky's opioid epidemic.<sup>[15]</sup>

Beshear joined 15 other attorneys general in December 2018 in opposing the ruling of a Texas judge that the Affordable Care Act was unconstitutional.<sup>[16]</sup> Beshear said that "for so many families the Affordable Care Act is a matter of life and death."<sup>[16]</sup>

Beshear served just one term as Attorney General, foregoing a run for a second term in 2019 to run instead successfully for Governor. Beshear resigned from the Attorney General's office on December 10, 2019, to be sworn in as the 63rd Governor of Kentucky. He was replaced by Daniel Cameron on December 17.

## Governor of Kentucky

### 2019 Kentucky Governor election

On July 9, 2018, Beshear declared his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for Governor of Kentucky in the 2019 election.<sup>[17]</sup> His running mate was Jacqueline Coleman, a nonprofit president, assistant principal, and former state house candidate.<sup>[18]</sup> In announcing his candidacy, Beshear said he would "make public education a priority."<sup>[13]</sup> In May 2019, he won the Democratic nomination with 38 percent of the vote in a three-way contest.<sup>[19][20]</sup>

Beshear and his campaign focused on local issues specific to Kentucky, such as Medicaid expansion, education funding, and pensions.

The night of the November 5 election, NBC News and other major outlets called Beshear the "apparent winner" over incumbent Republican Governor Matt Bevin,<sup>[21][22]</sup> though the Associated Press called the race "too close to call" with less than half a percent of the vote separating them.<sup>[23][24][25]</sup> Beshear won by 0.37 percentage points, getting 49.20%

of the vote to Bevin's 48.83%.<sup>[26]</sup> Days later, Bevin had not conceded the race, claiming large-scale voting "irregularities" but not offering evidence.<sup>[26]</sup> However, Kentucky Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes' office declared Beshear the winner.<sup>[27]</sup>

On November 14, 2019, Bevin conceded the election after a recanvass was performed at his request that resulted in just one single change, an additional vote for a write-in candidate.<sup>[28]</sup>

## Tenure

Beshear was inaugurated as governor at 12:01 a.m. on December 10, 2019.<sup>[29]</sup> In his inaugural address at the public ceremony later that day, Beshear called on Republicans, who have a supermajority in both houses of the Kentucky Legislature, to reach across the aisle and solve Kentucky's issues in a bipartisan way.<sup>[30]</sup> Beshear fired all eleven members of Kentucky's state education board on his first day in office, all of whom had been appointed by his predecessor, Matt Bevin, promising a fresh start. On December 12, 2019, Beshear signed an executive order to restore voting rights to all adults in Kentucky who have been convicted of non-violent felonies who have served their sentence, affecting over 156,000 eligible individuals.<sup>[31][32]</sup>

Beshear began overseeing the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in early March 2020.<sup>[33]</sup> There has been contentious political debate over his decision to dispatch state troopers to record the license plate numbers or VINs of persons that violated the state's stay-at-home order to attend in-person Easter Sunday church services in April.<sup>[34]</sup>

In June 2020, Beshear announced his resolve to work towards universal health care for all African-American residents of Kentucky in an attempt to resolve health care inequities which came to light during the COVID-19 Pandemic.<sup>[35][36]</sup>

## Political positions

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Beshear is seen as a moderate Democrat. Both his social and fiscal beliefs are seen as left-leaning. However, he has expressed his desire and intent to work with Republicans across the aisle on all issues. Many of his newly appointed cabinet members are registered Republicans.<sup>[37]</sup>

## Criminal justice

As Kentucky Attorney General, Beshear fought companies responsible for Kentucky's opioid crisis and got US\$9.5 million in settlements for 16 treatment centers across the state. Beshear signed an executive order as governor to completely restore the voting rights of those convicted of non-violent felonies.<sup>[31]</sup>

## Economic policy

Beshear states that he wants to bring more advanced manufacturing jobs to Kentucky to offset job losses due to the decline of coal. In addition, Beshear wants to increase the number of health care jobs in the state. Beshear opposes the right-to-work law signed by his predecessor, Matt Bevin.<sup>[30]</sup>

## Education

Beshear supports a major pay raise for all teachers in Kentucky, who earn one of the lowest salaries of any teachers in the country.<sup>[30]</sup>

## Environment

Beshear accepts the scientific consensus that global warming and climate change are real and caused by humans. Beshear wants to create more clean energy jobs to employ those who got laid off of their coal jobs. Beshear wants to expand clean coal technology in Kentucky.<sup>[38]</sup>

## Equality

Beshear supports same-sex marriage and equal rights for LGBTQ people. When he was attorney general, 60% of his staff were minorities and women.<sup>[38]</sup>

## Health care

Beshear supports Kentucky's Medicaid expansion, which provides affordable health care to over 500,000 Kentuckians, including all people with pre-existing conditions. Beshear criticized his predecessor, Matt Bevin, for trying to roll back the state's Medicaid expansion (which ultimately failed). As Attorney General and Governor, Beshear repeatedly expressed support for the Affordable Care Act (known as Obamacare) and has criticized efforts to strike the law down in the courts.<sup>[38]</sup>

## Infrastructure

Beshear supports the project to replace the structurally deficient Brent Spence Bridge that carries Interstates 71 and 75 over the Ohio River between Covington, KY and Cincinnati, OH. The project has long been delayed, and the bridge is considered to be the most critical transportation link in the state of Kentucky. Beshear has expressed willingness to work with Ohio governor Mike DeWine, a Republican, to start the project. Beshear hopes to fund the bridge through conventional means and not tolling, however, he is unsure if the state has the funds to do that.<sup>[39]</sup>

Beshear has also expressed support for the construction of the Interstate 69 Ohio River Bridge between Henderson, Kentucky and Evansville, Indiana. He has stated that the project would be a priority for his first term, believing it would provide economic benefits to Western Kentucky.<sup>[40]</sup>

## Pensions

Beshear supports expanding gaming and gambling in Kentucky to help fund the state's pension system, which has accumulated US\$24 billion in debt since 2000, the most of any state in the country. Beshear opposed pension cuts made by his predecessor, Matt Bevin, and wants to guarantee all workers pensions for when they retire.<sup>[38]</sup>

As of June 30, 2020 the Kentucky State Pension Fund is at 58.8% of its obligations for the coming decades.<sup>[41]</sup>

## COVID-19

Beshear took a strong, top down, approach to the COVID-19 crisis and was widely supported across the state, despite heavy opposition from the state's attorney general, Daniel Cameron, and several Republican lawmakers, including Savannah Maddox.<sup>[42]</sup> In April 2020, he was rated as the #1 governor in the United States.<sup>[43]</sup> The Governor took several steps to stop the spread of the virus to include banning interstate travel for Kentuckians, banning all mass gatherings to include religious ceremonies<sup>[44]</sup> and encouraging business owners to deny service to anyone that does not wear a mask into a business in what he called "No Shirt, No Shoes, No Mask, No Service".<sup>[45]</sup>

Despite banning mass gatherings, Beshear stated that he supported peaceful protests in light of the George Floyd protests killing.<sup>[46]</sup> but previously opposed the anti-COVID-19 restriction protests held outside the capitol building in Frankfort.<sup>[47][48]</sup>

After continued violence in Louisville, Beshear deployed the National Guard on May 30, 2020 to restore law and order.<sup>[49]</sup>

## Personal life

Beshear and his wife Britainy are both members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and serve as deacons.<sup>[50][51]</sup> They have two children.<sup>[3]</sup>

On April 21, 2020, an attorney from Louisville, Kentucky, named James Gregory Troutman was arrested by Kentucky State Police and charged with one count of third-degree terroristic threatening for allegedly writing social media posts that were deemed as threats against Governor Andy Beshear's life, with one of the posts alluding to the 1900 assassination of William Goebel.<sup>[52][53][54][55][56]</sup>

## Electoral history

### 2015 Kentucky Attorney General Democratic Primary

Beshear ran uncontested.

Democratic primary Results<sup>[57]</sup>

Candidate	Votes	%
Andy Beshear	<i>Unopposed</i>	

### 2015 Kentucky Attorney General Election

Kentucky Attorney General election, 2015			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<span><span></span></span> Democratic	Andy Beshear	479,929	50.1%
<span><span></span></span> Republican	Whitney Westerfield	477,735	49.9%
Total votes		957,664	100.0%
Democratic hold			

### 2019 Kentucky Gubernatorial Democratic Primary

Democratic Primary Results

Candidate	Votes	%
Andy Beshear	149,438	37.9%
Rocky Adkins	125,970	31.9%
Adam Edelen	110,159	27.9%
Geoff Young	8,923	2.3%
Total votes	394,490	100.0%

### 2019 Kentucky Gubernatorial Election

Kentucky gubernatorial election, 2019			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<span><span></span></span> Democratic	Andy Beshear	709,577	49.20%
<span><span></span></span> Republican	Matt Bevin (incumbent)	704,388	48.83%
<span><span></span></span> Libertarian	John Hicks	28,425	1.97%
Total votes		1,442,390	100.0%
Democratic gain from Republican			

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## External links

- Official website of Governor Andy Beshear (<https://governor.ky.gov/Pages/index.aspx>)
- Beshear/Coleman campaign website (<http://www.andybeshear.com/>)
- Appearances (<https://www.c-span.org/person/?andybeshear>) on C-SPAN
- Profile (<https://www.votesmart.org/candidate/156112>) at Vote Smart

Party political offices		
Preceded by <b>Jack Conway</b>	<b>Democratic nominee for Attorney General of Kentucky</b> 2015	Succeeded by <b>Greg Stumbo</b>
	<b>Democratic nominee for Governor of Kentucky</b> 2019	<b>Most recent</b>
Legal offices		
Preceded by <b>Jack Conway</b>	<b>Attorney General of Kentucky</b> 2016–2019	Succeeded by <b>Daniel Cameron</b>
Political offices		
Preceded by <b>Matt Bevin</b>	<b>Governor of Kentucky</b> 2019–present	<b>Incumbent</b>
U.S. order of precedence (ceremonial)		
Preceded by <b>Mike Pence</b> <i>as Vice President</i>	<b>Order of Precedence of the United States</b> Within Kentucky	Succeeded by <b>Mayor of city</b> <b>in which event is held</b>
		Succeeded by <b>Otherwise Nancy Pelosi</b> <i>as Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives</i>
Preceded by <b>Phil Scott</b> <i>as Governor of Vermont</i>	<b>Order of Precedence of the United States</b> Outside Kentucky	Succeeded by <b>Bill Lee</b> <i>as Governor of Tennessee</i>

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